

PROGRESS DURING TOUGH TIMES

Independent Transportation Network

I am proud to have authored legislation in 2005 and 2007 which resulted in a new way to provide seniors and people with disabilities with the transportation they need. I had the honor of inaugurating the North Central Independent Transportation Network earlier this year. In



I had the honor of inaugurating North Central Connecticut's new transportation network. I cut the ribbon, started the engine and took Jean Paterwic on a ceremonial first ride at the Marilyn Michaelson Senior Center in Bloomfield.

addition to North Central, we are establishing other regional networks which help people live independently at home. Unlike Dial-a-Ride, the networks provide service on demand, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is a benefit not only to those who utilize the network, but also to their families,

friends, civic organizations and businesses because riders are still able to get around, spend their dollars at local businesses and remain active in our communities. Modeled after a system that has been successfully up and running in Portland, Maine since 1995, the state provided some seed money and changed certain laws to help the private sector make the networks work. Government involvement ends there. The networks are not permanently funded by any state or local budget.

More Efficient Probate Courts

During a difficult session, with cutting the state budget being our main focus, we were able to enact major reforms to our probate court system. These reforms bring our probate system into the 21st century, making it smaller (117 courts down to 54), more efficient and more manageable. The reforms will save taxpayers dollars and better protect our citizens. Working together, with state and local officials from both sides of the aisle, we accomplished this without loss of service or convenience in the courts of the 5th District. I want to thank my colleagues from West Hartford, Farmington, Bloomfield and Burlington for all of their hard work and cooperation.



Dear Neighbor,

The global economic crisis has hit all of us in Connecticut hard. We all have family, friends and neighbors who have lost their jobs, their health care and even their homes. In these challenging times, many of you have contacted my office looking for help and information.

I have heard about many who are not seeking ways to help themselves because they do not know where to turn. In this mailing, I have included a list of phone numbers and Web sites that you may find useful. If you have difficulty accessing any of these resources, please contact my office for further assistance.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Harris
State Senator

State Senator
Jonathan Harris

Legislative Office Building, Room 3000, Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol Phone: 860-240-0567
E-mail: Harris@senatedems.ct.gov
Web: www.SenatorHarris.cga.ct.gov



I'm proud to represent the
5th Senate District:
West Hartford,
Bloomfield,
Burlington
& Farmington

TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION on any of the following issues, fill out this coupon and mail it to me, e-mail or call my office. Make sure to give your name and mailing address and indicate which issues you're interested in. My contact information is on the address panel of this mailer.

☐ Business

☐ Health Care

☐ Environment

☐ Criminal Justice

☐ Children

☐ Education

☐ Energy

☐ Seniors

Name: _____


Address: _____

Town: _____ Zip: _____


E-mail: _____



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State Senator
Jonathan Harris
5th District

Serving West Hartford, Bloomfield,
Burlington & Farmington

RESOURCE GUIDE

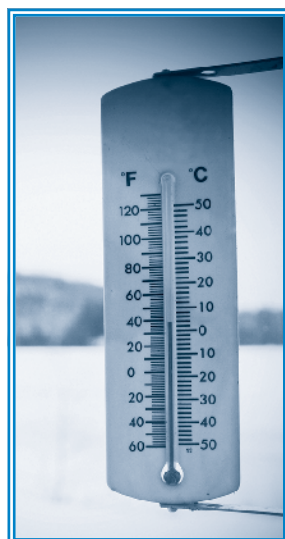
FOR SENIORS

- ▶ **Agency on Aging**
The North Central Area Agency on Aging can connect you with the appropriate entities to deal with many of your needs including nutritional services, disease prevention and health promotion services, family caregivers support services and adult day care aide positions. 860-724-6443
- ▶ **CHOICES Program**
This program provides information to persons age 60 and older. Currently, CHOICES is assisting seniors who need help enrolling in Medicare Part D by the January 15, 2010 deadline. 1-800-994-9422

ENERGY SAVINGS

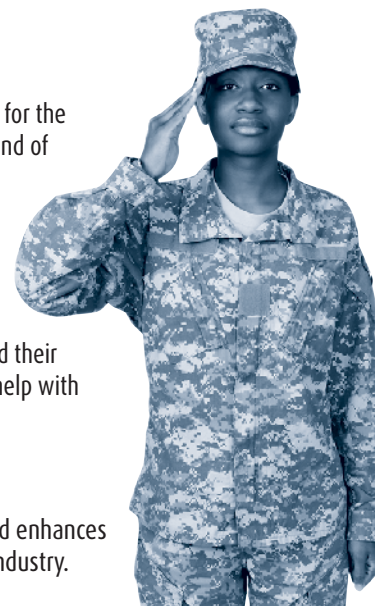
At both the state and federal level, there are numerous ways for consumers to realize savings on their energy bills.

- ▶ **Federal Tax Credits**
To help reduce energy costs and protect our environment, the federal government is offering tax credits to individuals who invest in making their homes more energy efficient. www.energystar.gov
- ▶ **Help with Electric Bills**
The Matching Payment Plan provides service and possible forgiveness of balances to low-income electric heating customers who are having difficulty making payments. 1-800-286-2828
- ▶ **More Help with Electric Bills**
The NUSTART Program helps low-income customers maintain year-round service. 1-800-286-2828
- ▶ **Choose Your Electric Supplier**
The rate you pay for the generation portion of your electric bill may be lowered. 1-888-922-3782; www.ctenergyinfo.com
- ▶ **Home Energy Audits**
Home Energy Solutions energy audits are available to all households if you heat with natural gas or electricity for a \$75 fee. 1-877-947-3873; www.cl-p.com
- ▶ **Help with Heat**
The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program and the Contingency Heating Assistance Program help offset the costs of winter heating and also pay for weatherization services. For income eligibility and benefit levels, contact the Department of Social Services. 1-800-842-1132



FOR VETERANS

- ▶ **The Military Family Relief Fund**
This fund provides grants in times of financial hardship for the immediate families of active-duty military personnel and of National Guard and Reserve members who have been mobilized for service in the Global War on Terror. 1-860-524-4968
- ▶ **The Connecticut Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund**
This fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families for needs including home heating assistance, help with rental payments and medical and dental expenses. 1-800-491-4941; www.ct.gov/ssmf
- ▶ **The Office of Military Affairs**
This office supports Connecticut's military families and enhances quality of life and advocates for the state's defense industry. 860-270-8074; www.ct.gov/oma



H1N1 FLU

- ▶ **Connecticut Flu Watch**
For facts about influenza, and more information about novel H1N1 influenza, visit the Connecticut Flu Watch Web site. www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch; 1-800-830-9426
- You may also contact your local health department:
- ▶ **Bristol-Burlington Health District**
860-584-7682; www.bbhd.org
- ▶ **Farmington Valley Health District**
860-676-1953; www.fvhd.org
- ▶ **West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District**
860-561-7900;
www.westhartford.org/whcares/TownDepartments/HealthDistrict/Health1.htm

A(H1N1)



Additional Resources and Links

Follow links to these special pages from www.senatedems.ct.gov:

- ▶ Home Heating Assistance
- ▶ Resources for Jobseekers
- ▶ Protecting Homeowners, Preventing Foreclosures
- ▶ Veterans' Guide
- ▶ Health Care Programs in Connecticut

FORECLOSURE RELIEF

- ▶ **The First Step in Connecticut**
If you're having trouble paying your mortgage, or are facing delinquency or foreclosure, contact the Housing Education Resource Center in Hartford. This agency is prepared to give advice, screen your eligibility for potential assistance programs and offer other resources to help you keep your home. 860-296-4242
- ▶ **Foreclosure Assistance Hotline**
Connecticut's Mortgage Foreclosure Assistance Hotline is available Monday through Friday, from 8 AM to 5 PM. The hotline provides materials, contact information and advice for Connecticut homeowners in any stage of foreclosure. 1-877-472-8313
- ▶ **State Foreclosure Mediation Program**
The Connecticut Judicial Branch provides foreclosure mediation in order to help homeowners and lenders reach a mutually agreeable resolution that aims to avoid home foreclosure. www.jud.ct.gov/foreclosure



FOR JOBSEEKERS

- ▶ **Where to Turn When Unemployed**
The United Way of Connecticut has produced a document titled "Where to Turn in Connecticut When You Become Unemployed." It contains various resources for individuals who have just lost their jobs. To receive a copy of this helpful publication, contact my office. 860-240-0567

TAX CREDITS FROM WASHINGTON

- ▶ **Making Work Pay**
A refundable tax credit of up to \$400, or \$800 if filing a joint return.
- ▶ **Temporary Increase in Earned Income Tax Credit**
Increases to income limits and credit percentages for working families with three or more qualifying children.
- ▶ **Temporary Suspension of Tax on Portion of Unemployment Benefits**
For tax year 2009, taxpayers can exclude up to \$2,400 of unemployment compensation.
- ▶ **The American Opportunity Tax Credit**
The Hope Credit has been extended two years, and up to \$2,500 of allowable expenses may be refundable.
- ▶ **Qualified Opportunity Tax Credit (Sec 529 Accounts)**
For 2009 and 2010, qualified expenses for higher education tax-free distributions are expanded.